

EDITORIAL COMMENT



IMPORTANT MEETINGS OF THE MONTH

PENNSYLVANIA STATE.

CONVENTION week in Pittsburg, in which, one following the other, the youngest and the oldest of the large organizations which we represent held annual meetings, proved to be an occasion of signal importance in professional progress.

The Pennsylvania State Nurses' Association met at the Hotel Schenley on Monday and Tuesday, October 5 and 6, to complete its organization by the adoption of a constitution and by-laws and the election of officers.

The proceedings of such a meeting are necessarily somewhat dry, although of the gravest importance, and the work was handled with promising intelligence and skill by the officers and members.

The laws governing registration in Pennsylvania are quite unlike those of some of the other States,—New York, for instance,—and the lines upon which the Pennsylvania nurses must act will be in accord with the existing laws now governing the registration of the other professions in the State. Politics, we were told by a medical man, play too great a part in the registration of physicians in the State of Pennsylvania, and the Nurses' Association must be prepared to face political interference supported by a pernicious and malicious group of quack nursing schools, of which there are a great number in Pennsylvania.

In the history of the world no reform has ever been accomplished without opposition, but if the Pennsylvania nurses will take time to educate the public to the idea that the first great benefit to be derived from legislation will be felt by the people, the advantage to the nurses being secondary, we predict a successful issue.

The question of the status of the bill to be presented to the Legislature was not reached at this meeting, but from opinions expressed by individual members we feel quite sure that Pennsylvania will not be satisfied to ask for less than the best that has been secured by the other States, and that she may profit by their experience and demand more. This should be the policy of every State now coming into line, for the fact that registration has commenced in other States must make legislative action easier.

We congratulate the Pennsylvania State Nurses' Association upon its excellent beginning, and we predict, if its leadership be wise, a rallying to its support of what is best in the medical profession, as well as the more highly intelligent of the citizens of the State.

THE SUPERINTENDENTS OF TRAINING-SCHOOLS.

Following the Pennsylvania State meeting, on Wednesday, October 7, the American Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools for Nurses convened for its tenth annual meeting.

This society, the first to be organized upon national lines in the United

States, has long ago left the perplexing questions of by-laws, eligibility, etc., in the background, and has reached the point in its development where standards and methods of education, reaching far into the future, and its duties in various public affiliations, are the subjects with which it is concerned.

For several years past many of the superintendents have been actively engaged in the work of the Associated Alumnae and latterly in State organization, and interest in the Superintendents' Society seemed to have flagged, but at the meeting in Pittsburg one was conscious of a closer unity and sympathy among the members than ever before, with an awakening to its responsibilities of leadership in all of the great educational problems at issue. This is its rightful prerogative, both by reason of seniority, and because its membership is composed of women who are engaged in teaching, from whom has emanated all of the advanced ideas in the educational methods of training nurses.

THE PAPERS READ

The papers read at this meeting were of a high order of excellence and will all be given in time in our pages, the two published in this number, "Some Common Points of Weakness in Hospital Construction," by Miss Goodrich, and "The Duty of this Society in Public Work," by Miss Dock, being perhaps the most suggestive. In both the writers emphasize the importance of insisting upon greater recognition in certain lines of work, both practical and moral, by the individual woman, by virtue of her office, and by the society, by reason of its high educational standards. Reprints of Miss Goodrich's paper have been made that members may place a copy in the hands of such among their Boards of Managers as would be interested or profit by the practical suggestions which it contains, and may be obtained by applying to Miss Goodrich, New York Hospital, New York.

The report of the secretary, Miss Nutting, given on another page, is so full and comprehensive an account of the official proceedings that comment is uncalled for.

The fact that the meeting was held at the beginning of the school year, too soon after the return of members from their summer vacation, and at a time when school work was being organized, accounts for the small attendance, and in view of this fact it was decided to try a midwinter meeting the next time.

Washington as a convention city offers peculiar attractions, and in January every superintendent needs a little outing, so that in 1905 there will undoubtedly be a large gathering.

THE SOCIAL SIDE.

How can we find words in which to do justice to the hospitality of Pittsburg? First of all we must pay tribute to the Pittsburg nurses, whose courtesy to the pioneer organization was one of the most gratifying features of the week.

On Wednesday noon the Alumnae Associations of the Allegheny General, the West Penn, the South Side, and the Presbyterian Hospitals gave a most charmingly served luncheon to the superintendents at the Hotel Schenley. There was a delightful informality greatly appreciated by the members upon this occasion, as friends were given the opportunity to seat themselves in groups and visit together, a privilege too rarely enjoyed at our large conventions. There were toasts of a kind to promote merriment, and an atmosphere of cordial good-fellowship pervaded the room.

On Wednesday evening the Alumnae Association of the Pittsburg Training-School gave an elegant reception in honor of the superintendents in the ball-room of the Hotel Schenley. This afforded the visitors an opportunity to meet many of the nurses and people interested in hospital and nursing work, and was in all of the details a most perfectly arranged affair.

The trolley-ride on Wednesday afternoon, showing first the residence section and then the great manufacturing portion of the city, with a visit to the Homestead Steel Works, gave the members something of an idea of the power that places Pittsburg in so influential a position in the commercial world, and the luncheon at Heinz's pickle factory on Friday, followed by an inspection of this great industrial workshop, was an event long to be remembered. The principles of asepsis applied to the problem of pure food was quite a novel idea to most of those present, and the extreme courtesy of the gentlemen who were delegated to entertain the members might serve as an object lesson to some hospitals.

It is impossible to give any adequate conception of the place, even if space permitted. We were impressed with the idea that in just the proportion that mechanical occupation retards brain development, an effort was being made by an unseen but compelling force to stimulate and cultivate the intellectual side of the employé. There was a beautiful hall, seating two thousand, where the best in music, art, and the stage are provided free of cost for the workers, and scattered through the buildings, on stairways and in passage-ways in close proximity to roaring machinery and great cases of merchandise hung beautiful pictures, including copies of the old masters, both religious and secular.

We found ourselves wondering if the antagonism now existing between capital and labor might not be dispelled by such measures in the future.

All of the superintendents and visitors were entertained at luncheon at the West Penn Hospital on Thursday, and the demonstration which followed of new methods and devices used in the New York, the Boston City, the Johns Hopkins, and the Presbyterian Hospital of New York was a most instructive and interesting feature of the programme. We are promised photographs of the appliances shown, most of which are the invention of nurses, so we attempt no description of them here. We feel that the West Penn Hospital, with Miss Russell, the presiding genius, deserve the most unqualified praise for the manner in which the exhibition was presented. The advent of four nurses, with an endless quantity of apparatus, all to be provided with space and service, gave much extra work to someone, and the guests were highly appreciative of the most excellent arrangements provided.

The banquet on Thursday evening, given at the Hotel Schenley by "some of the hospital superintendents," was a beautiful entertainment, and was presided over by Mr. Howells, of the West Penn Hospital, who, with his colleagues, was most solicitous for the welfare and pleasure of the members while in Pittsburg. This was the first time in the history of the Society of Superintendents of Training-Schools that superintendents of hospitals in any city have united to show the members attention of any kind, and in addition to the pleasure of the dinner there was the feeling that a step was being taken that must tend to bring the two most important groups of hospital workers into a more sympathetic relationship in the future than has sometimes prevailed.

The informal reception at the Homeopathic Hospital on Friday afternoon was the last of the social functions. The superintendents were received by the trustees and members of the Ladies' Aid Association, the hospital was inspected,

and one brought away impressions of cordial greetings, pleasant music, and tempting viands partaken of in a setting of harmonious color, a most delightful ending to a very interesting week.

We cannot leave this subject without paying tribute to the president, Miss Giles, who was, according to custom, also the chairman of the Committee of Arrangements. The programme was so perfectly worked out that not one change, either in the business or social calendar, had to be made, and she was untiring in her efforts for the comfort and happiness of her guests. Under her leadership, with all of the resources with which she was able to command, Pittsburg has won first place as a convention city.

THE NEW YORK STATE MEETING.

We have held our pages for the report of the New York State meeting, and we had intended to publish also the address of Dr. A. T. Bristow, given at that meeting on October 20, but the manuscript has not reached us in time, and we are obliged to hold it over until December.

Dr. Bristow is the president of the Medical Society of the State of New York, the organization that gave such cordial and effective aid to the New York Nurses' Association in securing the passage of its bill last winter, and as the representative of that body Dr. Bristow's advice and instruction is of special value to all nurses at this time, when work is beginning in so many different States.

PENNSYLVANIA REPORT NOT IN.

We regret to go to press *without* the official report of the Pennsylvania State meeting held in Pittsburg on October 5 and 6. Such reports are more valuable when made promptly. We appreciate, however, the hard work involved, especially when the society is in the formative stage and the officers are new to such work.

A NEW ALUMNÆ JOURNAL

St. LUKE's Alumnae Association has issued the first number of an official organ called *The Alumnae*, with Miss Harriet Fulmer as editor. The first number, a bright little paper, is published at the expense of one member as an experiment, and Miss Fulmer, as the president also of the Alumnae Association, in speaking of this little leaflet says:

"I hope to see established in the near future some sort of a medium in the way of a journal for keeping up the interest and knowledge of the society in the least expensive way possible. Another year this printed matter, in whatever form, could be included in the annual dues. This year it would not be possible to do this, as the funds for current expenses are low. I therefore urge every nurse to give her eight and one-third cents at each meeting and pay for this proposed leaflet for one year. If it does not meet your needs, at the end of the year we could discontinue it, but it does seem as if it might be worth a trial."

Such monthly magazines, devoted exclusively to the interests of a large association, serve as a very stimulating force in promoting interest and holding members together. We congratulate St. Luke's upon their venture and wish them every success in the future.

MORE NEWS

We are anxious to secure more authentic personal and news items about nurses and hospitals, and we again ask those especially interested in the JOURNAL

to send such items either to Miss M. E. P. Davis, whose address will always be found in the list of collaborators, or directly to the Editor-in-Chief. To our readers in foreign lands and in isolated places the personal news is a great source of pleasure. Miss Davis has undertaken to gather up such material during the month, and every item sent her will add to somebody's pleasure in the JOURNAL.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

THE Editor-in-Chief will be moving about during the coming winter,—will sometimes be in New York, Boston, and possibly other places,—but letters and manuscript sent to the address always found in the JOURNAL, Rochester, N. Y., will reach her, as she still claims that city as her home, but at intervals, in order to keep in touch with the new things in the profession, long visits to the large nursing centres must be made.

We ask again that *money* shall be sent directly to the publishing office in Philadelphia, and not to the editor personally, who does not have charge of the subscription list. Recently we were obliged to make a special trip into town from the country to obtain a post-office order, and as we did *not* know the sender, it was only after some trouble that the money was obtained. These seem trifling matters, but when time is valuable they are very annoying, and as in every possible way subscribers have been informed that subscriptions *should be sent to the publishers*, it is carelessness on the part of a subscriber to send money to the editor made to her personal order.

DEATH OF MISS DAVIDSON

OUR readers will learn with sorrow of the death of Miss Anna A. Davidson, whose second paper in "Points About the Private Nurse" was published in the October number of the JOURNAL. Miss Davidson had been nursing a case of typhoid fever under exceedingly difficult conditions, and contracted the disease herself, from which she died in a very short time after being taken to the Presbyterian Hospital, New York, of which school she was a graduate. We did not know Miss Davidson personally, but, judging from the articles given, and the expressions of love and regret which we have heard from her friends and associates, we know her to have been a rare woman and a brave and conscientious nurse.

The two papers published were to have been part of a series that Miss Davidson had offered to write for our pages. In the two papers printed she has given a message to the profession by which we may all profit, and in her death, in which she gave her life for her patient, we have an example of that courage and devotion to duty which are the first essentials in a good nurse.

